The Sun.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 1883.

The regular circulation of THE SUN *for the week ending Jan. 27, 1883, was:*

Sunday	142,[illegible]	Thursday	141,[illegible]
Monday	141,[illegible]	Friday	1[illegible]
Tuesday	141,[illegible]	Saturday	1[illegible]
Wednesday	141,184	Weekly	[illegible]

Total for the week.......................................1,034,381

Simple Facts.

It is eight weeks since our present Republican Congress met. It can sit only five weeks more. Republican newspapers complain that so little has been accomplished, and that so many important measures are yet to be acted upon in the brief period that remains of the session.

The country hardly expects to reap a harvest of good things from this Congress. The severe rebuke of the fall elections stunned for a time the Republican members, especially those of the House. But they soon got over their fright after reaching Washington. Having reinstalled SECOR ROBESON as their leader, they resumed business in the old familiar style.

On the surface, Congress appears to do a good deal of work, but it really completes very little, except to pass extravagant appropriation bills and open the way for large expenditures of public money.

If the people hope for substantial reforms in Federal legislation, they will have to look for them beyond the Forty-seventh Congress.

The Superior Healthfulness of Towns.

The ordinary and natural assumption is that the densely populated city is, perforce, more unhealthy than the country, and that the more closely packed the inhabitants of a town are, the less are their chances of life. The fresh air of the open country, it is believed, is more conducive to health than the confined air of a populous town.

But experience shows that, as a matter of fact, in many cases the rate of mortality is lower in a crowded city than in its thinly populated environs. The townsmen may be comparatively free from a class of diseases which beset the inhabitants of a neighboring region which contains scarcely more people to the square mile than a city district does to the square acre.

In a recent leading article the London *Standard* remarked, while referring to the healthfulness of the English capital as compared with that of other cities less populous, that "London is now almost an exception to the rule that the mortality increases with the density of the population." But a physician of Brighton, Dr. J. PARKIN, now comes forward with facts and statistics to show that, so far from there being any such rule, and London being the exception to it, London "is, on the contrary, a striking example of a rule that is almost universal, no fact being better established in all malarious and unhealthful situations, than the superior healthfulness of towns when compared with the surrounding districts. More than this," he adds, "it will often be found that the thinly populated part of a town is more liable to disease than the densely populated districts."

Take Rome, for instance. In the Ghetto, situated on the banks of the Tiber, the Jews are crowded together like bees in a hive, and in that very filthy district the streets are so narrow that it is impossible for a carriage to pass through them. Yet the malaria fever of Rome is almost unknown in the Ghetto, while in the more elevated and aristocratic districts of Rome, within the walls, where the population is scattered, the fever prevails. It has also been observed in Italy that when a monastery or convent has been vacated, for some reason the few attendants left in charge of the building have been in certain situations invariably attacked with fever. When, however, the former inmates or others in the same number have returned, the fever has immediately ceased.

During the prevalence of epidemic cholera, the ravages of the disease have been in an inverse ratio with population. This is more particularly apparent in those countries in which the disease has assumed an unusually severe form. For instance, during the first outbreak of cholera in Jamaica in 1850 the deaths at Kingston, the capital, were not more than one-eighth of the population. At Port Royal and Falmouth, small towns, they were one-third, at Port Maria two-thirds, and in the small villages, or settlements, the mortality was still greater.

It is well known that the environs of New York are infested with malaria fevers which are comparatively unknown in the older and most thickly populated portions of the city. During certain seasons, especially, they are apt to enter in as complications of nearly every disease the physician is called upon to treat. And the apothecaries in new districts up town which are covered with some of the most elegant residences in the city, can rely upon a very steady and great demand for their stock of quinine. Along the Hudson River, regions of remarkable natural beauty are almost spoilt for residence because of malaria; and the average appearance of the inhabitants as to health does not compare favorably with that of the denizens of some of our crowded wards. It is the same in the Connecticut valley, and in parts of Long Island, where, despite fresh sea breezes, the inhabitants are apt to have a sallow look of unmistakable origin.

The townsman who realizes a long-cherished dream of health and happiness by removing into the country, is often surprised to find that the vigor he and his family enjoyed in the crowded town, to which, perhaps, they were tied eleven months in the year, so far from being increased in the country, is very perceptibly lessened. And now generally, while the city sanitarians are puzzled over the problems of tenement house construction, street cleaning, sewage, and the like, their fellows in the country are discussing earnestly and almost hopelessly the means of staying the progress of malaria in regions where the fresh air sweeps over the most beautiful hills and dales.

Dr. PARKIN contends that the city sanitarians have the easier task, so far as certain diseases are concerned. He concludes that "density of population—within certain well-defined limits, those in which the oxygen of the atmosphere is in its normal or nearly normal condition—instead of being injurious during the prevalence of endemic and epidemic diseases, is actually beneficial." In New York, however, there are climatic conditions, joined to density of population, which unquestionably decrease the chances of life in children under five years to a greater extent than is usual in the country. This city is invariably a prey to an epidemic, as we may call it, of diarrhœal diseases whenever the thermometer gets up to 80° and higher and remains there for several days together. Children succumb to the hot and close air and its effect on their nourishment.

But doubtless it is true in the main that the city can be made more healthy than the country, for there the safeguards of health can be more thoroughly and scientifically applied. The causes of the preventable diseases may, perhaps, be more easily reached in a crowded population within narrow limits [illegible] ground to be covered is vast in extent. Moreover, according to Dr. PARKIN, the mere aggregation of population is an advantage which is not offset even by the uncleanliness and disagreeable odors incident to the packing of human beings in a small space.

The moral is that New York is not so healthy as so densely populated a city ought to be.

A Remedy Against Repudiating States.

It seems that a proposition has been introduced in Congress to amend the Constitution of the United States so as to give power to provide by legislation for the collection of State debts. That any State will ever consent to extend the judicial power of the United States further than it now exists under the Constitution, is a good deal more than doubtful. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution, all the States were largely in debt. As the judicial power had been framed, suits for the recovery of these debts could be prosecuted in the Federal courts, and such suits were commenced and maintained, not in favor of foreign States, but in favor of individuals. To curtail this jurisdiction the Eleventh Amendment was adopted, which took away from the Federal courts the power to entertain a suit against a State of this Union by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of a foreign State. But this amendment did not affect the jurisdiction over suits against a State by a foreign sovereign or a foreign State, or by another State of this Union.

There can be no doubt about the principle of public law that a sovereign may become the assignee of a debt due to one of his subjects from a foreign State, and may enforce or secure its payment by such means as he may see fit to employ, either by reprisals, or by war, or by a resort to the judicial tribunals of the country owing the debt. Whether one of the States of the Union can become the assignee of debts due its citizens and maintain a suit to recover those debts from another State is a question that is now understood to be pending in the Supreme Court of the United States. But it is not easy to see what is to be gained by further amendment of the Constitution, unless it is intended to declare expressly that the judicial power shall extend to suits brought by one State against another for the collection of debts due from that other State to citizens of the plaintiff State, of which the latter has made itself the assignee. If the Supreme Court shall decide that such a suit may now be maintained by a State of this Union, no amendment of the Constitution is needed. If the Court shall hold the reverse, the practical question will be whether a sufficient number of the States will consent to establish the power by an express provision.

There is undoubtedly a lamentable tendency in some quarters of the Union to resort to various pretexts for repudiating State debts. It would seem, however, that the better way to deal with this whole subject would be for each State, when it incurs or proposes to incur a debt, to incur it under a constitutional provision of its own that the State should be suable by the owner of the debt either in its own tribunals or in the Federal tribunals. Perhaps it would not strengthen the security much to make the State suable in its own courts; but it would certainly strengthen the credit of the State to submit itself by a voluntary provision to the Federal jurisdiction. It is true that a single State could not enlarge the judicial power of the United States, but it is not quite clear that such a voluntary submission to the Federal jurisdiction would be open to this objection. As any State can now sue another State in the Supreme Court of the United States on a question, for instance, of boundary or territorial ownership, or on some other causes of action, a voluntary State constitutional provision admitting that the State could be sued on other causes of action, might bring that particular State within the same principle.

But this would operate, if at all, only as to future debts. What can be done, or ought to be attempted, in regard to debts that are due and overdue, and which certain States have repudiated or are disposed to repudiate, is certainly a very difficult question. It is to be presumed that the Judiciary Committee of the House will await the decision of the Supreme Court before they undertake to frame an amendment of the Constitution on this subject.

American Animals at Hamburg.

There is to be an international exhibition of domestic animals at Hamburg in July next. The Government of the United States has been requested by the Senate of Hamburg to interest itself in this exposition, and to participate therein. The request came through the German Legation at Washington to the Secretary of State, who sent a translation of it—presumably on the assumption that Mr. LORING could not read German—to the Commissioner of Agriculture. This officer brought the matter to the attention of the House of Representatives, and a report of the Committee on Agriculture commends the project.

The committee affirms a number of propositions which nobody can deny. "The value of our animal products to our domestic consumption and our foreign commerce is very great." Doubtless this is as true in a Congressional report as it would be in a school reader. "The exportation of live stock, dairy products, animal food, and all the productions of the pasture and the stall, has become large and important." So far as we understand it, this is also true.

From these examples it might be inferred that the House Committee on Agriculture was addicted to vague generalities. But it is capable of better things. Here are some more specific propositions:

"The American shorthorn, both pure bred and grade, stands foremost as a beef-producing animal in point of thrift and quality.

"The American horse of all work, the product of many foreign breeds, and adapted to our climate and service, is hardly excelled anywhere.

"The wool-producing capacity of our sheep has not been surpassed.

"The type of swine bred for the market in great numbers in the West, and matured rapidly, is quite a model of perfection."

Indeed, there can be no doubt, the committee assures us, "that the domestic animals of our country can compare favorably with those of foreign countries."

Gratifying as this conclusion is, it would seem to render any representation of the United States at Hamburg quite useless—to American exhibitors, at least.

If we have the best animals already, as is asserted, why go to Hamburg to show them? There would be some use in going there with our cattle, our horses, our sheep, and our swine, if we supposed a comparison might reveal inferiorities in American animals, to be got rid of by wise management in the future; but we are told in advance that the comparison will, without doubt, result favorably to us. Why, then, take so much trouble to make it?

The platitudes of the report are relieved by two tables of statistics. One shows that the United States Government has appropriated money to provide for the representation of the country at eleven different foreign international exhibitions and congresses, beginning with the London International Congress in 1862, and coming down to the Berlin Fishery Congress, 1880. The other table states the aggregate value of the horses, mules, milch cows, oxen, steers, sheep, and swine in the United States in January, 1882, at upward of nineteen hundred millions of dollars.

A Hopeful Temperance Reform.

It is very obvious that a quiet but persuasive temperance reform is going on at present both in this country and England. Intelligent people are becoming more abstemious in the matter of alcoholic drinks, not on any moral grounds, and not in response to any temperance agitation of the GOUGH and MURPHY sort, but because they have learned that a prudent regard for their health requires them to be careful in the use of such stimulants.

We observe, and we are glad to observe it, that our young men of fashion nowadays are rarely addicted to hard drinking. It is not considered in good form by them. Moreover, the tendency to indulge in outdoor sports and to develop bodily strength, which is so marked at this time among young men, and young women too, is encouraging temperance in the use of alcohol. Free drinking is not compatible with the attainment of the end they desire. The use of distilled liquors, or spirits, both in clubs and private houses, is not nearly so general or so indiscriminate as it once was. The less harmful fermented liquors, light wines and beers, are now popular; besides, men are no longer ashamed to declare that they are total abstainers because of their experiences of the ill effects of alcoholic stimulation upon them. Nor is there any more reason for shame about that than about acknowledging their inability to partake of certain articles of food, or lose their sleep, without suffering damage which they do not care to sustain.

Business men are also learning the danger of casual drinking during their active hours, and moderation with respect to alcohol is getting to be usual among them. Very many of them have grown to be shy of cocktails, which have done a thousand times more harm to the brokers of Wall street and the frequenters of the mercantile exchanges than all the excitements of their occupations.

There was a time when drunkenness was considered a very pardonable, and perhaps amusing frailty or accident, even in the most respectable society. Nowadays it is looked on as it should be, as an offence against decency intolerable in a man who frequents the society of enlightened people, or a manifestation of physical disorder which should keep its victim away from temptation, or perforce induce him to exercise proper self-restraint, instead of imposing his weakness on his neighbors.

The temperance reform has been the result of more refined social customs and standards; but it is also very largely due to recent discussions by men like Dr. CARPENTER, of the evil effects of alcohol on the human constitution, especially when it is taken in a concentrated form and in quantities which are not much smaller than those to which most wine and beer drinkers even have been accustomed. It is therefore a reform brought about by the head rather than the heart. It has been effected by the judgment, not by the sentiments, to which the old temperance agitators almost solely appealed. Nor has prohibitory legislation, or legislation of any sort, contributed to its progress. People have grown more sensible about drinking, and that is all.

The progress of temperance in England is even more remarkable than that which is so obvious here, for in England the total abstinence movement was never so active as it has been in the United States. Whole religious denominations with us have condemned drinking as positive sin, and comparatively few clergymen dared to touch a drop of liquor, unless secretly. In some communities, at certain periods not remote, any man who indulged his appetite for alcohol to a moderate extent merely has been regarded with pretty general disapproval. And as to the native women, they generally abstained. But in England no social and religious war has been made on drinking. Clergymen and women have taken their wine there like other people, as a matter of course. Drunkenness, however, if it is among "the lower classes," has always been a sorrow to the moral folk in better circumstances.

Now we find that even among the "upper classes" of England total abstinence, once almost unknown, has become frequent. "Enthusiastic supporters of the movement," the London *Daily News* tells us, "have been disposing of their wine cellars." The statistics of the consumption of both distilled and fermented liquors show that the total amount of them drunk has declined very considerably during the last few years. The consumption of imported wine was nearly eight per cent. less in 1882 than in 1881, and nine per cent. less than in 1880. Of imported spirits the consumption was less in 1882 than in 1881 by one and one-half per cent., and of domestic spirits by one per cent. Slightly more beer was drunk in 1882 than in 1881. At the same time there has been a remarkable growth of the consumption of tea and of cocoa. Three per cent. more tea and eight per cent. more cocoa were drunk in 1882 than in 1881, and the increase for the last year as compared with 1880 was large.

Yet during that time England has been prosperous, the people have been expending money with perhaps rather more than average freedom, and the tax-bearing power of the nation has been increasing. Moreover, the population has been growing during the period, so that the actual decrease of consumption of alcohol per head has been greater than the above figures show.

The present temperance reform is the most hopeful which has yet occurred. It is likely to be permanent and to go on increasing.

The Lenox Library.

Mr. GEORGE H. MOORE, the accomplished superintendent of the Lenox Library in this city, says the library is not yet in a condition to be opened to the general public for reading purposes, though he thinks that in the course of time some system will be introduced by which those "whose intelligence and information warrant it" may be allowed to consult the books there.

In the same conversation with a reporter of the *Tribune*, Mr. MOORE spoke of the Lenox Library as simply the private collection of one man. The great mass of people in New York, he thought, were not qualified to appreciate the treasures there, and could not with safety be allowed to handle them.

By reference to the session laws of this State we find that it is just about thirteen years since the Lenox Library was incorporated. Unless it was intended to fulfil some public use, it should not have been incorporated at all. There is no reason why the Legislature should confer the attributes of a corporation upon a man and his friends simply to enable them to take care of his private collection of books. We do not say that the Lenox Library ought at once to be opened to all the world without safeguards or restrictions, but the people certainly ought to enjoy some benefit from the institution besides the privilege of looking at the outside of the building. The trustees required time, of course, to put the collection into an available condition, but thirteen years would seem to be long enough.

The act of incorporation provides that the real and personal property of the library shall be exempt from taxation in the same manner as that of the other public libraries of this State. How much longer must the public go with absolutely nothing in return for this exemption?

We learn from the *Chicago Herald* that the city of Chicago has passed an ordinance which provides that after the 1st of May next "no person, company, or corporation shall maintain or use any telegraph pole, telegraph line or wire, or electric conductor in any street, avenue, or alley in said city, under the penalty of $50 for each and every day such person, company, or corporation shall maintain or use any such telegraph pole, line or wire, or conductor." Now let the Legislature of New York go and do likewise for this city and Brooklyn; yes, and for all the other big towns of the State.

The shifting bog which is threatening to overwhelm a part of the town of Castlerea, in Ireland, is a very interesting phenomenon, and one of the most singular results of the heavy rains which have of late prevailed in various parts of Europe. According to our special cable despatch, thousands of acres of land have already been overwhelmed by the bog, and several farm houses have been destroyed. To those who think of a bog only as a low, swampy piece of ground, it may seem strange that it can change its place and move across the country. Bogs, however, are not necessarily either low or level, and some of those of Ireland present a hilly appearance. They grow by the accumulation of vegetable matter, and when softened, as in this case, by long continued rains, may encroach upon the neighboring country. It is to be hoped that some means will be found to stop the advance of the bog upon Castlerea.

GIDEON J. TUCKER is a suitable man for Quarantine Commissioner.

The poem printed a few lines below originally appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*. It is from the graceful pen of Mrs. H. T. E. WHITE, who was born a DRISCOLL, and probably christened FRANCES, which name was corrupted into the nickname of FANNY, and so indiscriminately used that Miss DRISCOLL herself finally accepted the alteration to the extent of allowing herself to be known as FANNY DRISCOLL. Under this name she became one of the most conspicuous of the modern poets of the West, and her poems were zealously sought for by journals all over the land. The newspaper that was lucky enough to obtain one, paid her for it, and the others would copy it, too often without credit to the paper which had paid for it. She wrote often for the *Tribune*, but all attempts of that journal to induce her to confine her efforts to its columns were futile. At last a cunning scheme was concocted, and it seems to have met with success. In the *Tribune* office was a young man named WHITE, the brilliant originator of the GWENDOLINE MAHAFFEY romances, and he was commissioned, since all other inducements had failed, to go out and attach Miss DRISCOLL to the *Tribune* staff through the ties of matrimony, and thus the horse reporter went and brought Miss DRISCOLL back to Chicago as Mrs. WHITE. The result is that the *Tribune* publishes the first post-nuptial effort of her muse as follows:

TWO.

I.

Far up the pure white heights of womanhood
She stood in starry light serene and calm;
A lily on her breast, and in her eyes
A deep, sweet peace; in sun and bloom and balm,
Her pathway stretched across the cloudless day—
"O Love," she smiled, "you led my feet this way!"

II.

Low down in bitter dusk, in starless night,
A woman with a red rose in her hair
Told the wan moments off in bitterness,
Dazed with the depths of her own dun despair;
Along her pathway shone no beacon ray—
"O Love," she cried, "you led my feet this way!"

Hereafter all the other journals which have profited by Miss DRISCOLL's genius, will have to credit her productions to the *Tribune* or not print them at all. We offer our hopeful congratulations to the blissful pair.

The irrepressible war between freshmen and sophomores has been raging recently at Bowdoin College, and, as often happens, has just resulted in bellicose relations between some of the students and the faculty. It appears that five members of the sophomore class, who were leading spirits in the hazing of the freshmen, have been suspended, and their fellow classmen have decided to cut all college exercises until the faculty is brought to a proper sense of the rights of students. The young men undoubtedly feel very much like gallant knights, deeming it disgraceful to desert their comrades in arms; but if the faculty should persist in regarding them as rebels, and treat them as such, they may begin to question whether this display of chivalry is not a little Quixotic, after all.

Our esteemed contemporary, which sheds its light upon the interesting town of Glasco, Kansas, avers that THE SUN "never fails to regard every Republican as a natural thief." This is erroneous. There are natural thieves and thieves made by education in both the great political parties. But, as the Republicans have been long in power, while the Democrats have been excluded from the enjoyment of that luxury, the great proportion of the thieves have gradually gone over to the Republican side; and in that party many of them have attained to high position and commanding influence. There are honest Republicans and there are thievish; there are wise Democrats and there are fools; and we endeavor not to confound these various descriptions of people with one another. We dare say that after the Republicans are finally turned out, and after the Democrats have had possession of power for ten or twenty years, they will gradually acquire a majority of the rascals, and it will be necessary to turn them out, in order to reform the Government and make it once more honest and patriotic.

The storm which struck the western and northwestern coasts of the British Isles on Thursday night and penetrated far inland was, it appears, of the most terrific description. At sea vessels were wrecked and driven ashore, and on land houses were unroofed, chimneys were blown down, trees were uprooted, and general destruction was wrought. To add to the terrors of the gale, some of the rivers overflowed their banks. This recalls the "Great Storm," as it is preëminently called, which raged over the British Isles in November, 1703, and in which twelve men-of-war foundered, the Eddystone Lighthouse was destroyed, damage amounting to ten million dollars was done in London, and vast destruction was wrought, with much loss of life, throughout England. Great Britain has not infrequently suffered from destructive gales of this kind, several of which, besides that of 1703, have become historic. Both last fall and in the fall of 1881 great storms raged on the British coasts. If we are to believe Prof. WIGGINS, the Canadian storm prophet, we shall experience in March next a greater storm than even England has ever suffered from; but nobody appears to believe WIGGINS except WIGGINS himself.

FRANK JAMES, who has just been released on bail, pending trial for participation in the Blue Cut robbery, appears to be enjoying much peace of mind, with the exception of a slight apprehension about his fellow Missourians in Daviess county. According to Mr. JAMES's philosophy, the residents of this county are narrow bigots, unable to understand the feelings of a captured brigand, and inasmuch as CLARENCE HITE, who had the grace to plead guilty, was sentenced to prison for twenty-five years for his connection with the Winston train robbery and the murder of Conductor WESTFALL, JAMES does not know to what length "the hostile feeling of those people" may go when they come to deal with him. He evidently feels that as a relic of a Missouri institution he ought to be preserved.

THE SOUTHERN PROGRESS.

Alabama's Important Iron Industry—Convict Labor in Coal Mines.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Jan. 11.—A great deal has been written about the prosperity of Georgia. She has been held up to Northern eyes as the Yankee State of the South. It is true that in Georgia there is more personal liberty of political thought and action than in any other cotton State. But as for thrift and the ability to seize on the natural wealth that has lain idle for generations, and use it to personal advancement, the men of Georgia are not more advanced than their neighbors in northern Alabama.

The iron industry of Birmingham has been created by Southern capital almost exclusively. There are five improved blast furnaces in operation, or shortly to blow in, at this point. There are three large and well-equipped machine shops, three foundries, two wood-working establishments, and several brickyards. There is also an extensive rolling mill in successful operation. In the near future it is probable that Birmingham will have about 25,000 inhabitants. That it will ever be a second Pittsburgh, as is confidently claimed by the hopeful men doing business here, I do not believe.

The quality of the iron produced is generally No. 1 and No. 2 "foundry." Iron is manufactured here cheaper than at any other place in the United States. I am told that this most excellent pig iron is produced at a cost not to exceed $10 per ton. This is a remarkable statement, but I believe it to be true. The wages paid to the unskilled black laborers are very low; indeed, none of the men employed around the blast furnaces are paid enough to enable them to live decently. The skilled labor employed in the rolling mill, such as puddlers, heaters, and rollers, is better paid than in any northern mill. This is also true of the mechanics employed in the machine shops. I was surprised to see that one of the great blowing engines used in the blast furnaces was built in one of these shops.

Is this industry built on a solid foundation? I think it is. Fourteen years ago I opened some iron ore mines on the flanks of Tussey Mountain, in Pennsylvania. The seams were commonly known as the red and yellow fossil ores. They were really the Levant iron ores. The history of the mining of the fossiliferous iron ores along Tussey Mountain, in the Black Valley, about Bedford, and on Will's Mountain, is that when depth was gained the seam of ore changed its character and became worthless. From a good, free-working iron ore, it changed into a hard limestone or into a soft sandstone. I can recall no exception to this rule. The outcrops of the seams were alone of value, and they were liable to extensive faults. The seams of iron ore being worked at this point are identical with those of the Levant sandstones in Pennsylvania. Already the miners working on these thick seams at this point complain that the seams change and grow leaner as depth is gained. In addition to the fossiliferous iron ores, the No. 2 limestone next above the shales on the Levant sandstone invariably carries hematite ores. These ores are of fairly good quality and easily worked, and are present in large quantities at this point. The coal is abundant and of a very superior coking variety. The coke I saw drawn from the ovens at the Sloss furnaces was fully equal to any I have seen in the Northern States. One ton of it will make a ton of pig iron. It was of surprising uniformity of texture.

A point of the Alleghany Mountains juts into northern Alabama, and the lower seams of the Alleghany coal field are in place in these mountains. The upper seams have been washed away. The coal extends, with a few breaks and some small throws, throughout Walker county and along the Warrior River for many miles. The two lower seams of the coal measures only are in place. Much of the coal lands is held by the South and North Alabama Railroad Company under a land grant from the national Government. These lands are offered for sale by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company. Large quantities are held by settlers who entered the lands under the homestead and entry laws. The land has small value for agricultural purposes, and it is but fair to conclude that the homesteaders really desired the coal and the timber, caring nothing for the land itself. That these entries are fraudulent is true; but it is also true that the fraud cannot be proved.

I am satisfied that the outcrop of the fossiliferous ores will supply these furnaces for many years. The hematite deposit is practically inexhaustible. Limestone for fluxing is abundant. One great drawback to the speedy development of this growing industry is the short supply of coal. The output is about two thousand tons per day, but that amount is not sufficient to supply the Southern demand and the furnaces and mills. Many coke ovens are lying idle, and the founders were uncertain as to whether they could get enough coal to justify them in blowing in their new furnaces. The coal mines are six or seven miles from town. A branch line of railroad connects them with the main line. These mines are, without any exception, the most wretchedly opened I have ever seen. I do not think that this is the result of ignorance on the part of the engineer, but that it is the natural outgrowth of the system of leasing mines, of employing convicts, and of the stringent spirit of economy that prevails in the Southern States. I saw working rooms that were eighty feet across, and many of the rooms were double. All the coal that is left to support the roof is lost, as it is not possible to draw the slight pillars. The ventilation is wretched.

Can coal lands be purchased and other mines opened? Yes. But I do not think an enterprise of that character would be advisable. Before the war—this is the new date in the South; every thing is before or after the war—I doubt if the negroes were ever sent to prison in Alabama. A negro was a valuable piece of property, and he was not shut up in unproductive idleness; nor was he chased with wide-mouthed bloodhounds that tore him savagely. Men who owned slaves took good care of their health. They did not send them into damp, ill-ventilated coal mines to work. The abolition of slavery has created a class of black convicts in the South. In the old days these men would have been soundly whipped, and set to work in the cotton fields. Now they are tried and sentenced to long terms of hard labor. The policy of the State is to make the prison system self-supporting. To do this the convicts, both white and black, in Alabama, are leased to the highest bidder. The highest bidders are the workers of the Pratt and Elyton coal mines, near Birmingham. I understand that the State penal institution of Alabama is to be transferred to the Platt coal mines. The price paid for this convict labor is about $12 per month. The State slaves are forced to cut an average of from six to eight tons of coal per day. If they work over time, they are paid the same rates per ton, 45 cents, that the free miners receive. Their food is simple, consisting of bacon, corn meal, and a few vegetables that they raise under the eyes of their guards. I judge that twelve cents per day would cover the expense of their food. They are clad at the expense of the contractors, who have also to pay for the guards necessary to watch them. The total outlay for food, medical attendance, clothing, guards, and fires cannot be over 25 cents per day. To this add 40 cents per day paid to the State for the use of the convicts, and the total cost is 65 cents per day. For the 65 cents the convict must cut 6 or 8 tons of coal. Thus he cuts coal at a cost to his employer of 8 or 10 cents per ton. With all the courts of Alabama sending convicts to the coal mines, I see no chance for any mine employing free miners to compete with a convict mine. The man who controls the slaves of the State of Alabama can at any time break the market and utterly ruin his competitors who use free labor.

FRANK WILKESON.

A Suicide's Widow.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Mrs. Katie Doyle, the widow of paralytic Owen Doyle, who hanged himself last Saturday a week ago, is in circumstances of peculiar destitution and distress. She still occupies the wretched ten by twelve room back of 418 West Seventeenth street, in which she is confined to her bed by the rheumatism that was racking her aged frame at the time that she was still slaving at the washtub for the support of her husband and herself. She has neither money, food, nor fuel, and her neighbors have deserted her. These circumstances are aggravated by her mental misery and the injustice with which she has been treated by her husband's relatives.

The impression has been conveyed that they made themselves responsible for her husband's funeral expenses, and that the newspaper accounts of his death reflected in some way upon Mrs. Doyle's conduct as a wife. This is wholly untrue. With the exception of some trifling charges the entire funeral expenses were borne by an own cousin of Mrs. Doyle, himself a poor man. But the contrary impression has gone forth to the prejudice of the poor woman among her hardworking neighbors.

The widow is almost beside herself. Helpless in her horror-haunted little den, her imagination is a constant torture to her. She keeps her face covered, and the picture of her husband hanging by his neck over the door, where she was the first to find him, seems to be ever present before her startled gaze. Unless relief is afforded her, and that speedily, she must die there, unpitied and alone in her desolation.

If you will kindly call the attention of the charitable to this hard case, Mr. Editor, you will do a good action.

401 EAST 110TH STREET, NEW YORK. N. D. U.

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Citizen, Beaver Dam, Wis.—THE SUN's items of news are right to the point, including West as well as East and South; and any one who takes it cannot help but be well posted both in foreign and home news.

Vermonter, Vergennes, Vt.—THE SUN gives all the news in a succinct form, and is outspoken and honest. You cannot make a better investment if you want the greatest amount of news at the least possible cost.

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The President of the Nineteenth Century Club Not a Skeptic.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* THE SUN is generally just, even when it shines upon the unjust, yet for once, at least, it has fallen into error.

In your article of yesterday entitled "A Remarkable Association," you say I am "an avowed skeptic and infidel." Now, I am not going to quote Tennyson in retaliation, by saying that there's more faith in honest doubt than there is in half the creeds, because I think the poet was wrong. There may be *honesty* in doubt, but there certainly is not much *faith*. We have faith in what we believe in, not in what we do not believe in.

You would hardly call a Mohammedan or a Buddhist "an avowed skeptic and infidel." Then much less should I, a positivist, be so described, for as such I am a believer, not an unbeliever. I am, in truth, entirely free from doubt, for I am fully convinced that the theological interpretation of the world is a mistaken one, and that the tale which science tells of the earth and of man is the correct one. And in this conviction and belief I have found more of the peace that comes of believing than the old integration could ever afford. I have had my abode in both domains, and know whereof I speak. My only reason for rejecting the Christian religion is because it is not religious enough for me. I have, therefore, adopted the belief of Léon Gambetta, Emile Littré, George Eliot, Harriet Martineau, of Goethe, Comte, and Herbert Spencer, on the principle that the highest faith of the best souls of this century is good enough for me.

Nay, I go further and unhesitatingly affirm that the real skeptics and infidels now are the Christians themselves. A skeptic is one who doubts; an infidel is one who lacks faith. Such, I hold, is the position of the orthodox Church to-day. But I am making a serious charge, so am glad on this point to lean upon the authority of no less a master than James Anthony Froude, where he says in his essay on "Science and Theology": "Theologians no longer speak with authority. They are content to suggest, to deprecate hasty contradiction. Those who doubted before now openly deny. Those who believed on trust have passed into uncertainty. Those who upheld orthodoxy cannot agree on what ground to defend it. Throughout Europe, throughout the world, the gravest subjects are freely discussed, and opposite sides may be taken without blame from society. Doctrines once fixed as a rock are now fluid as water. Truth is what men trow. Things are what men think. Certainty neither is nor can be more than the agreement of persons competent to form an opinion, and when competent persons cease to agree the certain has become doubtful—doubtful from the necessity of the case. This is a simple matter of fact. What is generally doubted is doubtful. It is a conclusion from which there is no escape. The universal assent which constitutes certainty has been dissolved into the conflicting sentiments of individual thinkers."

But I have written thus far of my faith as an *individual*. In my capacity as President of the Nineteenth Century Club, I am neither orthodox nor heterodox, neither conservative nor radical, but am impartially endeavoring to establish, with the powerful aid of the ladies and gentlemen who are assisting me, a club which, as Shakespeare says concerning the stage, shall "hold the mirror up to nature," and show "the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

COURTLANDT PALMER.

Hand Work and Machine Made Horseshoes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In your issue of the 20th inst. I noticed a short article in favor of hand made horseshoes. I will throw a little light on the subject of hand made horseshoes, and the fraud perpetrated by boss horseshoers using machine shoes.

In the first place, machine shoes are inferior in the most essential point. The iron is too soft, and wears in one-fourth less time than the iron out of which hand made shoes are manufactured. The hammering and snagging process through which hand made shoes pass makes them hard, and therefore more durable. A set of hand made shoes are supposed to wear at least four weeks, and in order to make machine shoes wear the allotted time they must be one-fourth heavier. This unnecessary weight naturally causes leg weariness, which is conducive to interfering, thereby greatly diminishing the usefulness of the animal. A shoe is placed on a horse's foot for protection alone. It should be so put on that it affords protection, and at the same time places the weight on the strongest part of the foot (the toe and quarters). A shoe, when properly fitted, is sprung off the heels, the weakest part of the foot. Now, I maintain if the iron is soft (as in the case of the machine shoe) it will not stay sprung off the heels, but will bend down and bear or rest on the heels, causing corns, quarter cracks, &c.

Two of the most necessary qualities required in a first-class horseshoe are elasticity and durability, neither of which is possessed by the machine shoe. Horseshoe iron costs $80 per ton, and it takes two men at least two weeks to make a ton of it into shoes. Their wages would be at least $76. It would take $4 worth of coal, making in all $160 for a ton of hand made shoes, while a ton of machine shoes costs $100 at retail. The boss saves at least $60 by the operation, and that is the reason for their being used. If the many horse owners would take note of the names appearing on the poster, and patronize no one that uses machine shoes, there would be few lame horses in this great city. No one should patronize any one that carries on a business under false pretences. If such was the case no industrious man could earn an honest living by the sweat of his brow.

JOHN P. PURCELL,
President Journeymen Horseshoers' Union No. 1 of New York.

A Philadelphia Club Rebuked.

From Progress.

If the Journalists' Club gives entertainments for the benefit of its fund, it is to be presumed it will not ask the gratuitous services of artists, for a club of newspaper men cannot afford to place itself under obligations to professional people whom its members may afterward be called upon to criticise.

SUNBEAMS.

—In Norristown, Pa., forty tobacco dealers have signed an agreement to close their shops on Sunday.

—It is reported from Scotland that the health of Francis Murphy, the temperance orator and worker, has given way under pressure of overwork.

—Prof. Robertson, whose alleged heresies made such commotion in the ecclesiastical circles of Scotland, has accepted the Professorship of Arabic in Cambridge, England.

—Brother Miln, agnostic and actor, has retired in solemn disgust from the editorial chair of the *Alliance*. He says he is tired of editing a paper, and admits not only that he never had any talent for this sort of work, but that he has made a dismal failure of it. As an actor Brother Miln has been more successful.

—The *Independent* criticises the Evangelical Alliance, and intimates that it is a fussy concern. It raises questions as to who compose the Alliance, who manage it, and who make up the topics for the Week of Prayer. The suggestion is thrown out that not more than three men conduct the business, and that possibly it might be correct to narrow even this small number down to one man.

—The Park Reformed Church of Jersey City has learned an expensive lesson on the instability of earthly wealth, especially as connected with certain Jersey City banking institutions. Some weeks ago this church held a fair, the proceeds of which amounted to $800. In order that this money might be perfectly safe, it was deposited in good Brother Boice's City Bank. At latest accounts it had not been taken out, and it is not likely to be. The good sisters who engineered that fair will have to hold another to make good the lost funds.

—There is a possibility that the notorious King Mtesa may now cast in his lot with the Roman Catholics. The Jesuits of Uganda are laboring for his conversion, and are said to have made considerable progress with him. If he does not remain attached to the Roman Catholic Church longer than he has to the various other denominations whose faith he has at times professed, he will be of very little account as a convert. Among missionaries generally he has been regarded as the most troublesome convert made in Africa.

—Complaint is made by a religious paper that the motto of Harvard College appears, with the seal thereof, on the prospectus of the veterinary school attached to the institution. The motto is a Latin one which, being interpreted, is "For Christ and the Church." It is by some people considered degrading to put such a motto on the literature of a concern whose highest purpose is the treatment of brute beasts. But as the Scriptures give the prophecy that "in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses 'Holiness unto the Lord,'" there seems no great impropriety in relieving the physical ailments of a dumb animal in the name of "Christ and the Church."

—The Prophet Elisha visited Philadelphia last week. He was not the prophet of Israel, who in the olden time made an axe float on the water and directed two she bears to destroy forty-two rude boys. But he was an independent crank, laboring on his own hook, and without entanglements with any Board, society, or denomination. Instead of incurring the risk of hiring a hall, and making himself responsible for the rent, he modestly put a notice in the papers, saying that he was the last prophet the Lord would send before the millennium, and that if somebody would procure him a hall he would give the Philadelphians such Bible expositions as had not been heard. In case of his failing to satisfy and edify his hearers, he would forfeit the sum of $50. As he offered to prove that both theologians and infidels are wrong, he received no encouragement from either. No hall was put at his disposal, and consequently the people of Philadelphia must continue to grope along as of old, without the light on Gospel truth which he proposed to shed. But he let it be understood that he expects the world to come to an end in thirty years from now, prior to which time he hopes to have converted to Christianity all the Israelites in the world, and to have led them to the Promised Land. This "Prophet Elisha" publishes a "Key to the Bible," which has not as yet commanded a large sale.

—A spirited discussion is now going on in Brooklyn as to the right of a clergyman to strike back when he is struck. This is not in regard to a matter of fisticuffs, for the clergy have not fallen into any such pronounced discord even in Brooklyn. But it is in connection with the thousand little mean accusations and petty innuendoes in which the brethren and sisters who do not like the minister indulge. Some of those who direct their shafts of tattle or sarcasm at their pastor say that he is not graceful enough when he stands in the pulpit, that he rolls his eyes when he prays, in a way which they dislike, or that his manner is too much like that of a dry goods salesman and his voice like that of an auctioneer. Perhaps it is best that the man of God should not reply to any of these remarks. Yet, as he is a human being, it is hardly possible that he can refrain from doing so. His critics wait their opportunity, and when they can catch him saying some sharp thing in response to something mean that has been said about him, they gather their friends in knots at the door of the prayer meeting room and ask if he can be a godly and humble man to talk in that manner. Some of those who have been most severe and petty in their criticisms adduce the case of the Saviour, who "when He was reviled, reviled not again;" and they say the minister ought to be like his Master. If asked if they are like their Master, they say that is quite another thing, and the standard is higher than they think they can attain. But they think the minister ought to be like Him. And so the discussion goes on.

—In England a new feature of the work of the Salvation Army blossoms into existence. The banking and financial department is in operation. Gen. Booth has been in the habit of receiving the contributions of the charitable for the purpose of carrying on the work of the Army. Wishing to increase his resources he has now been vigorously making applications for legacies from the wealthy. Yet, knowing how people who make bequests in their wills frequently nullify them by codicils, the worldly-wise Booth takes measures to secure the present bird in hand rather than the prospective bird in the bush. To this end he offers a bond bearing five per cent. interest, signed by himself and his son, as an exchange for all money which may be bestowed on the Salvation Army by persons intending to bequeath it. This, he says, will provide the payment of an income to such persons while they live, and at their death the money is to become the property of the Salvation Army. The scheme has the advantage of giving the Booths and their Army the immediate possession and use of money which might not otherwise come into their possession for years, or possibly not at all. In this country the persons who have represented the Salvation Army have not thus far been of the kind to raise any large amounts of money. Somehow or other they manage to get money enough to work along on, but have not as yet made any concerted or conspicuous appeal to capitalists. "Salvation Fives" will probably not become extensively known among the money kings of Wall street.

—The pastors of the churches in Gloversville have unwittingly been advertising theatrical performances and circus shows in a manner which they had not intended. The factory hands and other people of Gloversville had an old habit of patronizing such entertainments as they from time to time came along. The pastors concluded that the moral effect of this was bad. So they held a meeting and passed resolutions to the effect that attendance on theatre and circus was demoralizing, and that the people of Gloversville ought with one accord to turn their backs on these ungodly vanities. The result of this proved vastly different from what the guileless dominies had desired. In the times of Jonathan Edwards the village pastors could tell their fellow citizens exactly what to do and what not to do, and the fellow citizens would generally mind them. But the Gloversville pastors are not as Jonathan Edwards was. They found that their resolutions developed in the community of Gloversville a wonderful appetite for the enjoyment of theatrical and equestrian display. Had the purveyors of spectacular attractions paid liberally for the notice given them the advertisement could not have been better. Many people who had not been in the habit of attending shows wanted to go, out of curiosity, to see what the shows were like. Some who had generally stayed away said that now that the dominies were taking a hand in the business they would go, although they had not previously intended to. If the circus and theatre people can now persuade the pastors of Gloversville to preach courses of sermons on the evils of such shows their fortune in that vicinity will be made.

—In their regular course of study the Sunday schools will to-day take up the subject of "The Healing Power," as recorded in Acts iii., 1-11. Last Sunday's lesson mentioned the fact that by the Apostles many signs and wonders were wrought. This was evidently for the strengthening of the faith of the new converts, and to show to the outside world that the religion of Jesus Christ contained elements of supernatural power. The particular exhibition of this power now presented for study was in the case of the miraculous cure of a helpless cripple who was well known as a beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple in Jerusalem. This is the first special apostolic miracle on record. Peter and John were together going into the Temple. The cripple asked them for money. Peter said: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Lifting him up by the hand, he set the poor beggar on foot, the result being that his feet and ankle bones received strength. Now the beggar was no more a cripple, but leaped and walked, and praised God for his new-found strength. Of course this act of Peter and John created a great commotion. A crowd collected in the Temple porch "greatly wondering." Some admired; others criticised; many condemned. The conduct of the restored man is worthy of notice. He gratefully acknowledged what had been done for him, and on the spot made profession of his faith in Jesus Christ. His admission of how the cure had been wrought put the scorners to confusion. The Jewish authorities immediately became excited, the results of which excitement will be seen in next Sunday's lesson. This passage gives a pleasant teaching about the power of God's grace to the most needy, and the blessing of a grateful heart for favors bestowed. Peter and John, with such a victory on hand, could afford to suffer the spite of the Sanhedrim to the uttermost.